all a sole producer of coal in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Some recommendations|allotments of coal were being received from sponsoring authrities| coordinating agencies on specified collieries carrying 10 per cent premium. In such cases it was presumed that the recommendation|allotment was made with the concurrence of the concerned consumer. Some consumers however challenged the charging of 10 per cent premium on coal produced in specified collieries over and above the prices notified for different grades of coal. High Court at Jabalpur disposed of those petitions on the assurance from the coal companies to the effect that consumers need not necessarily buy coal from the collieries carrying 10 per cent premium and they are free to purchase coal from other collieries.

(d) to (f) CIL does not fix the price of coal. The price of coal including premium on coal is fixed by the Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred on it by clauses 3 and 4 of the Colliery Control Order, 1945, as continued in force by section 16 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Coal India Limited (CIL) charges the price of coal as per the statutory notification of the Government. Generally the criterion followed for fixing the price of coal is the recommendation made, after study, by the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices. Under clause 4 of Colliery Control Order, different prices can be fixed for coal produced in different collieries.

Status of ash as vendible coal

3562. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether coal beyond 35 per cent ash was not considered as vendible coal till the erstwhile Coal Board was working;

(b) if so, under what considerations the present grading of coal upto 55 per cent ash is also declared as coal for industrial use; and

(c) whether it is a fact that lower variety of coal creates problems of pollution and of handling while utilising the same in different industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. The erstwhile Coal Board had been grading coals of ash content upto 35 per cent and coals beyond this range of ash were considered to be non-vendible.

(b) and (c) In the present grading system coals with ash and moisture content upto 55 per cent have been considered as vendible. The conservation of valuable natural energy resources like coal was the main consideration taken into account in the present grading system. The consumption profile of coal has undergone vast changes over the last two decades. Earlier, the design of combustion equipment was such that only coals with high heat value could be utilised. With the emergence of Pulverised Firing of coal particularly in the thermal power station boilers, it has become possible to utilise coals with high ash content with high thermal efficiency The modern coal combustion equipment particularly the power station boilers can handle coals with high ash content without any serious problem. The environmental pollution mainly arises from the 'fly ash' produced when the coal is burnt. This problem can be considerably reduced by using beneficiated coal.

Non-availability of coal to Gujarat Electricity Board and SSI units

3563. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL:

SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the power stations managed by the Gujarat Electricity Board and the SSI units in the State are facing acute hardships in getting coal in time;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is a virtual lack of coordination between Coal India Limited and the Railways in allocation of wagons for transporting coal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the industrial units and the power projects in Gujarat are getting inferior quality of coal which contains 50 per cent dust and stones;

(d) what steps Government are taking to minimise the hardships and complaint of Gujarat Electricity Board and other State Electricity Boards including the SSI units in the country; and

(e) whether Government propose to privatise the distribution of coal and reduce the present rate of duty on hard coke from 80 per cent to 25 per cent, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) It is not a fact that power stations managed by Gujarat State Electricity Board (GEB) are facing hardships in getting coal in time. The demand of coal for the power houses is assessed by Central Electricity Authority. The demand materialisation of GEB during the period April-June, 1993 was 108 per cent. Due to improved despatches power houses have been regulating and restricting acceptance and unloading of coal.

The demand materialisation of coal for "other industries" is some what lower than the programme. This is sinec most of the consumers in Gujarat prefer to draw supplies of coal mainly from Korea-Rewa Coalfields of South Eastern Coalfields Limited. Coal despatches from this field could not be stepped up due to various constraints including that of transportation. If these consumers agree to accept coal from diversified sources the movement would be higher.

(b) No, Sir. Close coordination is being maintained by Railways and Coal India Ltd. (CIL) to achieve the targets of movement of coal by rail.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. According to the information received from CIL, companies on quality and size of coal have been received for less than 2 per cent of the overall despatches of coal to Gujarat.

However, in order to ensure despatches of coal free from extraneous materials like stone etc. coal companies have taken the following steps:

(i) Stones are being segregated at the time of loading of coal.

(ii) Slow moving picking belts are being provided in coal handling plants for picking up of shale & stone pieces.

(iii) Better supervision is being ensured at the time of loading to maintain quality of coal and developing quality consciousness among workers, supervisors and executives.

The consumers can also post their representatives at loading point to supervise the quality of coal loading.

(e) Coal is supplied to actual users, against linkages|sponsorships or both. This coal is not available for resale under the provisions of the Colliery Control Order, 1945. However, in order to further improve the availability of coal, coal is also sold under a Liberalised Sale Scheme (LSS).

Recently, the Liberalised Sale Scheme (LSS) has been further improved to extend the benefits to a larger cross section of buyers. Interested buyers under 'LSS' have been categorised as under:

1. Actual users.
2. Mini Traders.
3. Whole Sale Traders.
4. General.

First preference in order booking and despatches under Liberalised Sale Scheme would be given to actual users who can draw coal for their own use in addition to the normal supplies being received by them against sponsorships/linkages. Second preference would be given to the Mini Traders registered with coal companies. CIL have given wide publicity inviting application for registration as Mini Traders. Mini Traders would be supplied coal upto 100 tonnes per month subject to availability after meeting the orders booked by actual users. Third preference would be given to the Whole Sale Traders appointed by the coal Companies subject to availability after meeting orders booked by first two categories. If some quantity is still available, it would be allocated to other interested buyers.

As regards rates of customs duty, any changes are notified after a decision has been taken.

Production of coal in Bihar

3564. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production of Coal has gone down considerably in the State of Bihar during the last five years;

(b) if so, what are the details of the coal productd in Bihar during the last five years, year-wise; and

(c) what action Government propose to take to augment the production of coal in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The coal production in the State of Bihar from the mines under Coal India Limited during the last five years was as under:

Production *(in million tonnes)*

1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
63.57	62.50	63.38	64.84	66.68

(c) Steps taken to further augment coal production includes opening of new mines, modernisation of existing mines, application of new technologies to achieve maximum results and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

Deep reserves of Coal

3565. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that major part of the coal reserve explored so